

A Work Project presented as part of the requirements for the Award of a Masters  
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GLONATE  
YOUR INSPIRING JOURNEY WITH IMPACT

ORCUN DURSUN  
(996)

A Project carried out under the supervision of:  
Prof. Miguel Alves Martins

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## **I. Abstract**

This work project serves as the very first milestone for my own future social start-up GLONATE. The idea is to create a social giving and storytelling platform that connects donors, messengers and recipients through social interaction. The platform will enable potential donor`s to connect to messengers in order to mutually contribute to a social cause. An innovative donation chain that does not only help the needy people but also at the same time creates and shares emotional stories among all participants.

The objective of this paper is to analyse the feasibility of this social giving platform and to demonstrate value proposition.

### **Key words**

Social Entrepreneurship, Global Giving, Social Awareness, Social Media

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### **III. Introduction**

We are walking into a future that takes new shapes every day. On the one hand, geopolitical stir, global famine, and the current on-going refugee crisis have brought people to a stage as never before. The call for solidarity, support and staunchness is unmistakable and cannot be ignored. On the other hand, a new digital world in which people's striving for change, social awareness, collaboration and differentiation is common practice.

Luckily, on the bright side, most of us are, at least to a certain degree, aware of current tough situations of individuals outside - and would like to intervene. Though, it is always the same hopeless journey: a sudden motivation to start supporting the people in need, donating generously through a wide range of campaigns, actively collaborating with numerous institutions and organizations, and mobilizing affiliated friends. But sooner or later, during the progress, the initial efforts fade away and so does our thirst for action.

I am convinced the main reason for donation failure emerges from the fact that potential donors do not have a direct relationship to the recipient or any information where their contribution goes - simply transparency issues. Additionally, the underlying process till the final contribution is inscrutable, time-consuming and requires a lot of patience and paperwork.

GLONATE is the solution that will overcome exactly these challenges and ideally establish as further alternative social giving platform for people with drive. It is a

The aim of this paper is to analyse the feasibility of my project GLONATE - a social giving and storytelling platform that connects donors, messengers and recipients through social interaction. The platform will enable potential donor's to connect to messengers in order to mutually contribute to a social cause. An innovative donation chain that does not only help the needy people but also at the same time creates and shares emotional stories among all participants.

#### **1. Motivation**

The idea of this social giving and storytelling platform that connects donors with messengers and recipient arose from my travel journeys. During the last seven years, I have been on the road and intensively aimed to stay abroad in various places with the

objective to gather as much as possible experiences and to enjoy cultural exchange to the utmost. So did my journey start, I backpacked from country to country, hitchhiked years, and came across unique people with different backgrounds.

Being very thankful for this opportunity, I always kept in mind to come up with a way to include my family, friends and environment into my adventures and to also allow them to actively participate, enjoy these cultures and capture the same memorable stories around the world - but more important to give back something in return for people's endless support I have encountered during my journeys.

With the idea GLONATE, I hope to reach out to a large target audience and encourage many to also take off and start a new, meaningful chapter of life by travelling and sparking never-ending inspirational stories around the globe.

## **2. Idea**

What if I tell you that with the small amount of money you are currently wearing in your pocket you could right now donate a chicken to a poor family living in the suburbs of India, and witness the whole process in real time. You would get to know how the chicken is being bought at the local food market, brought to a family with low-income backgrounds, and lastly served as dinner. Your little contribution would have filled the bellies of several people including children. And the best part of it, you are there - at least virtually. How would you feel?

This little story is just one out of million of other potential stories. You can contribute anytime, anywhere and be always sure that your contribution has a direct impact with full transparency. Your personal story can range from donating food to hungry people via clothes for children through to school supplies to needy education facilities - It can cover all aspects of life, and you will be always part of it. The only one thing you need is the right messenger.

This is how it works: Through the social giving platform GLONATE you can easily connect to any messenger around the globe, communicate with him and agree on your donation criteria. After all arrangements are set, you can transfer your money to him and from this point, the journey of the messenger starts. His goal is to deliver your contribution, based on your mutual arrangements, to any individual that is in need and complies with these. In this way, both the donor and messenger keep through the entire

donation chain connected and can share in any form of media the unique emotional stories that will arise. During the entire process, the messenger is committed to provide proper and correct documentation. At the end, the donor can rate the messenger and vice versa, and eventually share the story with the entire community. With this in mind, a new social giving platform with a large pool of donation stories combined with high trust and loyalty among the members will originate.

By using this innovative approach of donation, interests of all participants can be aligned and the entire chain benefits. On the one hand, the donor who is from the very beginning involved into the entire chain and ultimately witnesses the impact of his contribution in full detail. On the other hand, the adventurous messenger whose interest is to explore and discover different countries, cultures and habits by creating emotional binding stories while significantly contributing to the social success. Last but not least, the recipient who receives a warm, meaningful contribution from people who are getting part of his life.

### **3. Literature Review**

The academic literature on "charitable giving" is immense and includes various disciplines such as economics, finance, sociology, and psychology. Alone in Google the key word "charitable giving" yields more than 2.800.000 hits<sup>1</sup> and embraces large ambiguity. Other related terms such as "social giving, social charity donation, fundraising, peer-to-peer fundraising, event fundraising or friendraising also wander around when it comes to the action to donate voluntarily and provide aid.

For the sake of consistency, this paper will primarily use the term "social giving" as it is most common to use the term "social giving platform" when it comes to accessing a website but more important as messengers "individuals" will be used for the donation act itself instead of charities. Thus, with respect to the idea GLONATE, it is highly important that the definition of social giving does not only comprise the conventional meaning: "the voluntary donation of money to an organisation benefiting others beyond one's own family" (Bekkers & Wiebking 2007) but also refers to any kind of "gift" made by an "individual or organization" to any other "individual or organization" with the intention to support society.

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<sup>1</sup> Source: Google Search Engine, key word: "charitable giving"

The experts in generosity and philanthropy Rene Bekkers and Pamala Wiebking who evaluated more than 500 studies and became real pioneers in this field have already described and brought to evidence eight major predictors "Why people give?" These predictors are (1) Awareness of need, (2) solicitation, (3) cost and benefits, (4) altruism, (5) reputation, (6) psychological benefits, (7) values, and (8) efficacy (Bekkers & Wiebking 2007).

Not only the question "Why people give?" but also the part "Who gives" were profoundly examined by (Bekkers & Wiebking 2007, 2011) who presented the evidence on the relationship of giving with various characteristics, largely religion, education, age and socialization.

Social scientists have also identified how charitable behaviour lead to benefits for the donor. From economic incentives such as tax reliefs (Clotfelter 1985, 1997; Reece & Zieschang 1985) via social respect signalling the contributors' wealth or status (Becker 1974; Glazer & Konrad 1996; Griskevicius et al. 2007), through to psychological benefits such as experiencing personal welfare and prosperity from helping others (Andreoni, 1989, 1990; Dunn, Aknin, & Norton 2008).

In fact there is also evidence that giving and happiness correlate and operate in a positive feedback loop meaning that "happier people give more and giving makes people happier" (Anik, Aknin, Norton, Dunn 2009).

The author Marie Laperdrix has also provided a comprehensive literature review (Laperdrix 2011) on philanthropy and fundraising by examining deeper the relationship between philanthropy, history and fundraising and also the practical fundraising strategies with respect to ethical and economic aspects.

All social giving platforms, or donation campaigns interact with social institutions such as NGOs, which undertake the donation processes. However, the key differentiation of GLONATE to use individual people as donating messengers is something that has not been considered yet. Truly convinced that giving both the donors and messengers the freedom to participate and steer within the donation chain and to mutually create social stories is a new channel within charity giving that can be used to create awareness and lift social participation.

As a result, this social start-up idea creates a new research area and needs to be profoundly carried out with respect to its underlying donation model, its participants, the procedures and the main challenges it will bear.

The idea is not to substitute already existing charity work but rather establish a further alternative niche requiring more active collaboration and entertaining value for interested joiners.

#### **4. Structure**

Before digging in, the section preliminary investigation will first of all focus on the main problem - **transparency** - when it comes to donating especially through institutions such as NGOs. In doing so, this paper will interview relevant experts in the field of social sciences in India and shed some light on India's economic and social situation, and current problematic issues as corruption, fraud and money laundering. With this in mind, I will scrutinize the hypothesis that most donation activities and venues in India do not really provide full transparency and thus lead to trust issues between donor and recipient. This hypothesis is essential in order to start evaluating the core idea of GLONATE, a social giving platform aiming to provide full transparency within the entire donation chain. The interviewees will also give a short personal preliminary estimate of GLONATE in India.

The first part of this paper will bring the best practice example, the Ice Bucket Challenge into focus and briefly explain the success story of this donation campaign that went viral on every social network. On that basis, the first part of this paper will examine the criteria that play an important role to make social giving activities successful. The relevant question is how to create global awareness within a short period of time and make donors contribute from all over the world. In doing so, I will compare the Ice Bucket Challenge with my idea and evaluate whether GLONATE also displays similar criteria or ideally contains further factors beyond.

The main part of this paper is to give conclusion regarding the acceptance of this donating model and whether the idea attracts the interest of the participants in the donation chain. In here, I will separately analyse the impact of a story-telling approach on the role of each participant and conclude through interviews the reasons what makes them join this experience. The objective is to identify key factors for having appropriate



donators, messengers and also recipients that are in line with this innovative donation platform. With this in mind, a pilot test will also be conducted in which a group of volunteers with different backgrounds have the opportunity to experience the idea and create first successful stories. In doing so, I will make recourse to my social network and link interested donors to messengers including myself. The goal is to evaluate each case with the help of a subsequent interview and reveal major findings.

Last but not least, this paper will round off with a final conclusion about the utilization of this idea.

## **5. Methodology**

The main underlying part of this paper will be conducted in India, which I consider as good start before expanding to further countries due to the fact that the country displays challenging characteristics when it comes to donation, and more important to start with a first localization strategy which is key for a profound start-up analysis. Furthermore, I have the opportunity to collaborate with Indian students who are willing to help me with IT- related and technical issues such as website, design, technology and implementation.

The work project itself will follow a qualitative approach and comprise expert interviews, questionnaires and evaluate a pilot test with respect to particular research questions. In the best interest of readability, this paper will only use the masculine formulation.

## **IV: Preliminary Investigation**

### **1. Existing Social Giving Platforms**

There are plenty of fundraising platforms especially in the recent years that have immensely disrupted charitable giving with the help of crowdfunding. To name few: "*Kickstarter*", "*Indiegogo*", "*RocketHub*", "*Fundable*", "*GoFundMe*" or "*YouCaring*". Already thousands of projects have been funded with the help of these people-gathering websites. Though every project can create its own campaign and receive numerous amounts of support, the key focus does not lie solely on charity. Social causes are just one theme among plenty of other self-interested projects asking for personal loans,

vacations or initiatives that go beyond true basic human needs as preserving the space suit of Neil Armstrong that successfully raised over \$700,000.

Other well-known names, which operate in a more social environment, are "*DonorsChoose*" and "*Adopt-A-Classroom*". These are social platforms focusing on providing needy classrooms with materials by connecting teachers in high need communities with donors. Both websites help to support underfunded classrooms, which express their current needs ranging from lower needs such as math books via higher needs such as headphones, iPads, fencing equipment, etc. However both social giving platforms solely operate in the US and rather interact as pure fund-providing intermediary for predefined needs without putting the interaction of donor and recipient into focus.

Nevertheless, there are also well-established social giving platforms such as "*Booster*" or "*Ink to the People*" that focus on specific causes by raising money for designing and selling apparels. People can start specific campaigns and vend e.g. t-shirts to create awareness of a particular cause and ideally use the proceeds for support - a smart way to make the donor be identified with the project and globally connected through the apparel.

The industry is vibrant, also companies can already participate through corporate philanthropy platforms in which employees can donate, create or support campaigns, respond to global disasters and tragedies. Within the corporate world, "*Causecast*" and "*Benevity*" are proven and reliable employee giving platforms that emphasis on peer-to-peer interaction by providing a large pool of cases. Both business models strongly embed corporate culture and help to shape corporate social responsibility activities with strong impacts.

With "*RangDe*", you can invest in rural entrepreneurs or students all over India This social giving website supports young ambitious entrepreneurs and students with low financial sources by providing microcredits through crowdfunding. About 41,000 loans have been already distributed and the community is growing.

Last but not least, probably the most powerful social giving platforms focusing with high intensity on social causes are "*Givey*", "*Causes*", "*JustGiving*" and "*GlobalGiving*". GlobalGiving is the largest charity platform with over 500,000 people and 13 years experience; it has raised about \$205.5 million and supported 13,734

projects in 165 countries. All three websites show similar characteristics to GLONATE in which potential donors can connect to numerous projects and interact with the campaign starter and ensure full transparency of donation. They are highly integrated with social media and allow users to connect through social networks and moreover tweet particular campaigns.

Though, all existing social giving platforms do not pursue the model to connect donors with recipients through messengers - a key differentiator that not only creates true, honest awareness but also brings people closer to the field.

## **2. Expert Opinions on India's Economic and Social Climate**

There is no easy solution to poverty. India is a nation with multifarious socio-economic backgrounds. It is a country with a whopping 29% population living below the poverty line, currently defined at 32 INR in rural India (roughly 0.5 USD) and 47 INR in urban India (roughly 0.7 USD)<sup>2</sup> and which at the same time has World's Third-largest number of billionaires.<sup>3</sup> There is a sea of disparity in the distribution of economic wealth. There are many reasons that the poor remain in a vicious and convoluted circle. The Indian illiterate population is the largest in the world. While there isn't a direct correlation between poverty and illiteracy, they are symbiotic in nature. Education has not fully permeated the rural areas and female education is still neglected. The social environment discourages women from being educated, rather confines them to their domestic duties. Government initiative to enforce compulsory education is futile in cases where the children drop out of school to work and support their families. Lack of education leads to ignorance and the illiterate population is scarcely presented with job opportunities that could sustainably lift them out of poverty.<sup>4</sup>

According to Ragyeshri Sudaroli, member of Center for Social Action (CSA) at Christ University in Bangalore, there should be more funding from the government agencies to help the downtrodden. Physically, a lot of agencies exist, as do NGOs. In reality, there are few organizations that are legitimately concerned about effective change. There are pseudo-missionaries that are fraudulent and launder money that is given by donors.

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<sup>2</sup> Singh, M. K. (URL: 2014, July 7). New poverty line: Rs 32 in villages, Rs 46 in cities. The Times of India. Retrieved from <http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com>

<sup>3</sup> Patel, A. (URL: 2015, February 4). India has the world's third largest number of billionaires. The Wallstreet Journal. Retrieved from: <http://blogs.wsj.com>

<sup>4</sup> Compare Malik (2009), pp. 45-47

There are issues with transparency and clear-cut declaration of the input and output of funds. By and large, the potential donor population of India is suspicious and has a reasonable distrust in the operation model of NGOs. There are instances reported by the media too often to reaffirm these beliefs. People are sceptical and often, there is good reason to be. For example, the beggars one encounters at traffic signals are possibly organized gangs who actually collect it to hand it over to a gang leader who keeps a larger portion.<sup>5</sup>

Aparna Bajpai, Operations Manager for the English Helper Project run by American India Foundation (AIF), states following: The most universal channel of donation in India is via organizations already implementing pre designed, large-scale projects in remote areas. No doubt that these projects intend to or at least portray to reach a considerable amount of people. But the problem in these channels lies in the lack of active donor participation in the implementation process itself. And that results in possible alienation of the person donating from the beneficiary.<sup>6</sup>

Within her interaction with several people responsible for the Indian development sector, Aparna came across many examples of inefficiency especially of processes that call for international charity. According to her experience, most inefficiencies are due to inappropriate allocation to the value proposition and actually result in abundance of unused funds. Expecting complete transparency in operational processes in a country like India would be futile.

However, one of the most cogent reasons is the credibility of the NGOs in India, which is generally most of the time known to be inadequate in terms of target achievement, labour force management and most importantly reporting and investigation of work done in the field. The reason for this is that in case of a social intervention the targets cannot be quantified that easily and there cannot be a clear distinguishing standard between success and failure. The success of a social intervention is highly personal and situational.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Interview with Ragyesri Sudaroli (2015, November 16)

<sup>6</sup> Interview with Aparna Bajpai (2015, November 18)

<sup>7</sup> Interview with Aparna Bajpai (2015, November 20)

In order to give a real life example, I would like to refer to Nikhil Samant, also a social worker for the English Helper Project. Nikhil was responsible for 100 schools across 7 States of India and witnessed following:

The AIF has a network of individual donors in the US, which send some amount of money regularly for certain projects. This particular project that he was working on was conducting a summer camp for 15 government schools in Delhi. The funds were donated by a famous ballet dancer in the states who raised around 1.5 lakh Indian Rupees (equivalent to 150,000 INR, roughly 2,262 USD) to be utilised for the purpose of promoting creativity in highly dry schools of India. The actual amount of money spent in the field was merely 15,000 INR, just 10% of the total amount donated.

The problem was that the reporting was done in such a way that there was extensive amount of technical data included in the report leading to uncertainty of the left over money to be used for future similar activities.<sup>8</sup>

This rigorous approach is a clear sign calling for more transparency that can only be achieved with efficient documentation methods and the integration of subordinated organizations whose sole responsibility is the proper and correct distribution of those globally raised funds. Currently, efficient tracking systems still do not exist for many social institutions resulting to a continuous negative loop. The reason is that most of the infrequently existing mechanisms and structures are so complex and endlessly interconnected that at the very end no entity can keep accurate track on various transactions such as the one mentioned.<sup>9</sup>

Vineel R. Pindi, who leads the Social Enterprise Incubation Center (SEIC) in Hyderabad, points out that India serves as a country where more than 5,000,000 NGOs operate and each of them claims to be serious and transparent in order to access the funds collected from outside. Thus, most organizations operate in such a framework just to be entitled to utilize those funds and sadly to enrich their own interests. This is a common prevailing procedure. Therefore every day more and more charity organizations join the social sector to access those large funded pools. They justify dealing with problems and situations that are yet not covered by any other organization. De facto, this will lead to the dilemma that newcomers will just enter into a new self-

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<sup>8</sup> Interview with Nikhil Samant (2015, November 20)

<sup>9</sup> Interview with Aparna Bajpai (2015, November 20)

created niche rather than joining already existing organizations that pursue same or similar interests. In short, it is all about getting new money than efficient collaboration - it is our duty to critically and objectively judge the purpose of new social enterprises.<sup>10</sup>

### **3. Preliminary Estimate**

The reception to a donation by a messenger will be very interesting. I believe that there won't be a standard response to every donation. There will be some that will accept it heartily considering their situation and some that will deny it. Hopefully they will use any giving in a way that is productive and useful as there are worries of money that comes freely being used in a way in which its value isn't understood. There will be people with a healthy suspicion when a complete stranger is handing them over money. They might expect they need to give something in return. In my point of view, the challenges to GLONATE will be primarily in execution itself.<sup>11</sup>

The idea of this integrated donation model is definitely something that has not been taken place in this shape and I can imagine a higher integration of cross cultures. Cultures have some level of barrier but it can be transcended if the intention is made clear. The intention of a messenger must be made clear to override any cynicism. Even with no strings attached, there will still be some who will flatly refuse such donation, as they are perfectly content in their circumstances, which many will perceive as poverty. And there will still be some who will not accept money they have not earned or because there are those lesser fortunate than they.<sup>12</sup>

By using social media, GLONATE can proliferate into a large phenomenon, as it is a powerful idea. It creates a culture of giving and receiving with no expectation. It brings donors and the recipients closer in a way that anonymous donations fail to do. Being as powerful as social media is, such movements often go viral. There is a large scope for it to grow into a positive, enriching and compassionate experience.<sup>13</sup>

The preliminary analysis revealed important content regarding current transparency and trust issues, which needs to be considered in the later analysis of the pilot test. From this

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<sup>10</sup> Interview with Vineel R. Pindi (2015, November 25)

<sup>11</sup> Interview with Ragyeshri Sudaroli (2015, November 16)

<sup>12</sup> Interview with Aparna Bajpai (2015, November 20)

<sup>13</sup> Interview with Vineel R. Pindi (2015, November 25)

point, no conclusion regarding the acceptance of GLONATE can be made and thus needs further investigation.

## **V: The Case of ALS - Ice Bucket Challenge**

In this chapter, the paper will briefly introduce the success story of the ice bucket challenge, a viral social media activity that made hundreds of thousands people all around the world join a storytelling journey and donate for a charity.

### **1. Introduction**

The ALS Association is a non-profit organization that fights against amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS), a progressive neurodegenerative disease that affects nerve cells in the brain and the spinal cord. This organization is not only the first contact point when it comes to global research, providing assistance, and fostering partnerships but also in creating awareness and raising money for treatments and cures.<sup>14</sup>

In July 2014, the Ice bucket challenge caused a viral sensation in every social network and successfully raised more than \$220 million globally. In August 2014, the ALS Association already raised \$88.5 million, compared to \$2.6 million in previous year.<sup>15</sup>

The challenge is pretty straightforward: participants dump ice water on their heads, share the video, and then nominate other people within their social network to accept the challenge while raising awareness and money to fight against the disease.<sup>16</sup>

Besides the large positive impacts of the Ice Bucket Challenge donations on Research, Patient & Community Services, Public & Professional Education, Fundraising, External Processing, the challenge has had also a significant positive response on families coping with ALS - An unstoppable, conspicuous emotional gain for all interest groups.<sup>17</sup>

### **2. Success Criteria & Comparison**

Coming to the most important question what made the Ice bucket challenge such a success?

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<sup>14</sup> Compare ALS Association (URL1), (URL2)

<sup>15</sup> Compare Chester Charity CI Quarter 4 (2014)

<sup>16</sup> Compare ALS Association (URL3)

<sup>17</sup> Compare ALS Association (URL4)

Unfortunately, there is no simple answer to this question. What is sure, several factors have contributed to the viral success. With respect to the challenge itself, ease of participation, fun, the humour of watching friends' videos, the emphasis on sharing videos, and luck were the deciding reasons for its effectiveness.<sup>18</sup>

Nevertheless, there are also other relevant factors outside the challenge that play crucial role for global acceptance. A profound study carried out by Phing & Yazdanifard (2014) analysed five factors that contributed to the achievement of the ALS Ice Bucket Challenge, which I will illuminate more in detail and link up with GLONATE.

## **2.1 Social Media Marketing**

Social media in particular Facebook, Twitter and YouTube<sup>19</sup> can be used as an online tool for social interaction in which people from all over the world can share content, stories, opinions, knowledge or any information in form of messages, photos and videos.<sup>20</sup>

The use of social media marketing encourages users to actively participate within their network and simultaneously to reach out to a large universe of other user. It can be said that social media marketing stands out from traditional marketing media approaches and can be efficiently used as new venue "to recognize and fulfil consumers' needs in the most lucrative way". Continuous interaction and communication within the social media opens stage for users to become responsible for different roles, ranging from content provider via story blogger through to promoter for a brand, corporate or service.<sup>21</sup>

Thus, it can be said that social media marketing serves as an ideal platform to launch social giving campaigns where interaction among the community is required such as in the example of the Ice Bucket Challenge. As Welhoff (2012) already mentioned "participation, conversation, openness, community and interconnection" form the five pillars of social media.<sup>22</sup>

The social giving platform GLONATE can and will exactly focus on these pillars and aim to share and communicate its successful donation stories with a share function primarily through social media giants such as Facebook, Twitter and Pinterest. This will

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<sup>18</sup> Compare Charity CI Quarter 4 (2014)

<sup>19</sup> Compare Hyun (2013)

<sup>20</sup> Compare Papasolomou; Melanthiou, (2012 )

<sup>21</sup> Compare Tomše; Snoj (2014)

<sup>22</sup> Compare Welhoff (2012) cited in Erragcha; Romadhane (2014)



reach out to the universe of users within social media and encourage them to become part of the donation chain and ideally to create their own story that will further circulate through the network - leading to a viral sensation. With this said, the purpose of the website of GLONATE will be mainly to connect interested donors with messengers, the later on-going communication and sharing will take additionally place at other social media networks in order to be present at all ends.

## **2.2 Word-of-Mouth**

Word-of-Mouth (WOM) refers to "the sharing of non-commercial message about a brand, product, or service between two or more people."<sup>23</sup> Making people talk, tweet and discuss about a current viral trend is key for a successful campaign. The average American spends 906 million hours on social media sites and suchlike. A study of Anderson Analytics showed that about 46% of users in social networks give positive feedback about a brand, product or service, while at the contrary 23% give negative comments. Thus, online word-of-mouth is an indispensable part of social media use.<sup>24</sup>

Yazdanifard defines WOM as "the power of existing consumers" attracting "new consumers by sharing the contents as well as positive feedback".<sup>25</sup> Since people freely move within the social network, allowing friends, friends' friends, family and foreigners to easily access information, people can start building relationships and/or express their feelings towards a campaign. The fact that there are no virtual boundaries for Word-of-Mouth marketing, an incredible high-speed stream of information can be achieved.<sup>26</sup>

No doubt, that the ALS Ice Bucket Challenge recorded such a high stream of participants spreading awareness and publicly joining the challenge through using WOM. It is also wise to mention that the Ice Bucket Challenge's rule to nominate three people after has had a multiple WOM impact.<sup>27</sup>

The social platform GLONATE will rely on the effectiveness of Word-of-Mouth and enable participants including donors and messengers to share their mutual stories with the entire community. The participants do not only have the opportunity to communicate the final donation outcome but also each and every act of the donation

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<sup>23</sup> Compare Aslam; Jadoon; Zaman; Gondal (2011)

<sup>24</sup> Compare Barreto (2014)

<sup>25</sup> Compare Phing; Yazdanifard (2014)

<sup>26</sup> Compare Barreto (2014)

<sup>27</sup> Compare Phing; Yazdanifard (2014)

chain - from receiving the money via responsibly utilising it through to finally giving it to the recipients. Thus, the donation model will guarantee to make best use of WOM and conclusively to spread the unique stories several times in different time spans. With this said, the prerequisite of WOM is given.

### **2.3 Viral Marketing**

Bampo, Ewing, Mather, Stewart and Wallace (2008) specified viral marketing as "mode of communication among peers who are encouraged to spread marketing messages within their social networks" - In short, "a strategy that will broaden the coverage and influence of a message by encouraging people to disseminate the message."<sup>28</sup>

It is highly important not to get confused with the previous mentioned factor as WOM and Viral Marketing have overlapping meanings. A clear differentiation is following example: WOM literally means you as the main marketer just tell a given scenario to your five friends which has an echo effect, meaning that the "initial sound is loud and then fades away among the participating members." Whereas the Viral Marketing effect is stronger since it has a compounding effect on the spread of information within the entire community as users share the underlying content with five other users who again keep sharing it with five different users and so on. It is like a contagious virus that infects more people without requiring further effort from the initial creator.<sup>29</sup>

Logically, it can be said that the previous mentioned factor WOM is a main premise for making use of a viral marketing approach.<sup>30</sup> The success of Viral Marketing highly depends on the characteristics of the underlying message, traits of sender or receiver and the overall features within the social network The ALS Ice Bucket Challenge has become a thriving Viral Marketing effect and successfully conveyed the meaningful and charitable message into a message with entertainment and daring value that stood out. Participants and people who were challenged of this icy dare display compassionate, open-minded and socially responsible traits - good conditions not only to cause this viral sensation but also to connect social media users.<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>28</sup> Compare Bampo; Ewing; Mather; Stewart; Wallace (2008)

<sup>29</sup> Compare Lake L. (URL: 1 October 2015). Word of Mouth vs. Viral Marketing: What's the difference? About Marketing. Retrieved from <http://marketing.about.com>

<sup>30</sup> Compare Yuping (2012)

<sup>31</sup> Compare Phing; Yazdanifard (2014)

With respect to GLONATE and its social storytelling-giving model, a high degree of viral marketing can be achieved due to its wide range of possibilities to share an inspiring story ranging from text, photos, audio records, videos up to personal letters by the recipients. Due to this large variety of media to connect people, and share mutual stories, messengers will strive after distinctive creativity for their own unique journey, enabling a thrill among the community when following journeys. The key differentiation is that each story has its own elements, attributes, characteristics and interaction guaranteeing not observing every time the same content as in the Ice Bucket Challenge. As a result, interactively following each time different and unique stories will enable to broaden the coverage and influence of GLONATE and will have with each new generated giving assignment stronger impacts on encouraging other people to join.

#### **2.4 Celebrities` Influence**

A celebrity is an eminent individual such as "actor, entertainer or athlete" who enjoys high reputation from the public for his or her achievement.<sup>32</sup>

With the help of celebrities who accepted the icy challenge such as Oprah Winfrey, Bill Gates, George W. Bush, Selena Gomez, Taylor Swift and other world leaders CEOs and artists, the ALS Ice Bucket Challenge achieved high attention within short time.<sup>33</sup>

It is an often-used strategy to include celebrity`s endorsement into particular social media campaigns in order to gain faster the mass` attraction as prominent personalities are most followed and their posts, comments and stories achieve public acclaim. Celebrity`s influence have not only an impact on reaching out but also create "brand identification" and "global marketing" allowing people to accept better to the conveyed message due to the celebrity`s recognition and credibility.<sup>34</sup> Kelman`s theory of identification underline that in order to become emotionally attached to a conveyed message by a person, one must take up his or her "attitude, behaviour or belief". On this basis, many followers will be strongly influenced by celebrities by adopting his or her

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<sup>32</sup> Compare Stella; Yip (2009)

<sup>33</sup> Compare Phing; Yazdanifard (2014)

<sup>34</sup> Compare Keel; Nataraajan, (2012)

"lifestyle and values"<sup>35</sup> resulting to the fact that psychological boundaries between celebrities and their fans will converge.<sup>36</sup>

To give you an example, celebrities such as Selena Gomez, Taylor Swift, or Cristiano Ronaldo have followers in the amount of 58 million, 73 million and 107 million respectively.<sup>37</sup> The social influence is highly remarkable with the power of celebrity's involvement as the message can endlessly be further shared outside the initial base of followers.<sup>38</sup>

In short, the success of the Ice Bucket challenge can be certainly linked to the well-known personalities who participated in the challenge and were responsible in mobilising further thousands of people. With this said, the over all credibility of the campaign also increased.<sup>39</sup>

No doubt that celebrities can accelerate awareness and be also beneficial for the storytelling approach. The good thing is you do not need to be a celebrity to create a good story while donating but it helps to be considered as entertaining when you are a celebrity. However, GLONATE is not about pure entertaining but social awareness and helping people in need. Nevertheless, it also allows celebrities to join the donation chain especially as donor or messenger. Having said that, seeing celebrities donating through messengers can have a very significant impact on the overall social network environment, as it would require an interaction between them and ordinary people emphasising the equality of interested people in the donation chain. But also the other way around that a celebrity can also be a messenger for anyone else or another celebrity will have a good social amusement value with the intention to create social awareness.

## **2.5 Right Timing**

Last but not least, the right timing is decisive to pursue a campaign through social media. Simply said right timing marketing means "delivering the best marketing at the right time."<sup>40</sup> In the case of the Ice Bucket Challenge it refers to the moment when users

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<sup>35</sup> Compare Lindenberg; Joly; Stapel (2011)

<sup>36</sup> Compare Hung (2014)

<sup>37</sup> Source: Facebook

<sup>38</sup> Compare Jin; Phua (2014)

<sup>39</sup> Compare Phing; Yazdanifard (2014)

<sup>40</sup> Compare Goldstein; Lee (2005)

are most open and responsive to the underlying message. If the message is spread at the wrong time, there is no need to expect a high sharing rate among the members.<sup>41</sup>

There are several techniques to use in order to assess the right time for a social campaign such as "event triggers" which show when users are most likely to response.<sup>42</sup>

With respect to the challenge itself, it required participants to dump icy water on their head, which was during the summer an excellent way to get a quick refreshing in a very unique way.<sup>43</sup>

Truly convinced with the journalist Charles M. Blow's quote: "There is never a wrong time to do the right thing", I consider this also applying to the participation of GLONATE.

Though, the timing to launch a social storytelling-giving platform is highly suitable for several reasons: First of all, more and more people get actively engaged with social networks especially the rise of the older generation referred as "silver surfer". According to mirror.co.uk, more than half of the 55years old people own a smartphone and are adapting social networks such as Facebook.<sup>44</sup>

Second, an increasing trend in generosity and philanthropy worldwide is observed; Google research has revealed an upswing of 30% from August to September 2015 in searches referred to charity giving.<sup>45</sup> The number of people worldwide donating to charitable organizations increased from 1.2 billion to 1.4 billion in 2014.<sup>46</sup> Individual contributions make up 72% of charity giving, followed by foundations (15%), bequests (8%), and corporations (5%).<sup>47</sup> Furthermore, roughly one third of all online donations are a result of social fundraising<sup>48</sup> and there is evidence that volunteers donate twice as much as non-volunteers.<sup>49</sup>

Lastly, geopolitical stir, global famine, and the current on-going refugee crisis have moved people together and require active participation from all ends to enforce solidarity, support and social awareness.

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<sup>41</sup> Compare Phing; Yazdanifard (2014)

<sup>42</sup> Compare Dou; Wang; Ribarsky; Zhou (2012)

<sup>43</sup> Compare Phing; Yazdanifard (2014)

<sup>44</sup> Compare Phillips, T. (2015, April 15). Rise of the silver surfer sparks social media exodus for the digital native. Mirror Online. Retrieved from <http://mirror.co.uk>

<sup>45</sup> Source: Google Think Insights Report. Mission 501(c)(3): Driving Donations, Digitally

<sup>46</sup> Source: Charities Aid Foundation

<sup>47</sup> Source: National Center for Charitable Statistics. Quick Facts About Nonprofits

<sup>48</sup> Source: Donor Engagement Study. Aligning Nonprofit Strategy with Donor Preferences

<sup>49</sup> Source: Corporation for National and Community Service

Considering those given factors, there is no reason to believe to start later with this social project.

Though, industry insiders are highlighting that every charity has to find their own formula to become successful in raising awareness and money.<sup>50</sup> With this in mind, I am taking my idea of a storytelling social giving platform one step further and discuss besides the above mentioned factors and the in the beginning mentioned existing social giving platforms, the key differentiators of GLONATE.

## **VI: Donation Chain**

In this chapter, I will start elaborating and evaluating the key differentiation to other existing social giving initiatives and underline how further value within social charity can be created and achieved. With respect to this value proposition, each respective participant in the donation chain will be conclusively analysed.

### **1. Key Differentiation**

The value proposition of GLONATE will make use of following features: "Active Participation", "Emotional Relationships", "Financial Efficiency" and "Transparency".

With **Active Participation** it is meant that both donor and messenger are highly interacting with each other from the beginning. Both can via their personal profiles express their suggestions, ideas and intentions. The donor can connect through his selected geographic location with given messengers or vice versa.

The donor and messenger do not need to particularly join pre-existing campaigns but can create together with the messenger their own personal proposal during the course of their conversation. Whether the donor steers the messenger or the opposite, at the very end, the messenger will get actively involved and discover his journey and respond back his experiences to the donor. Ideally, both participants stay in touch through the end of the journey while the messenger also strives to build a bridge between donor and recipient in order to share the evolved emotions.

The feeling of an **Emotional Relationship** is important for all participants during the donation chain. It is immensely necessary to stay connected through the process and

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<sup>50</sup> Compare Chester Charity CI Quarter 4 (2014)

that a potential donor does not only see his action in form of a pure target achievement but more important of feelings, vibes, emotions, senses and impressions.

Building social charity around stories helps to stand out from other conservative and rigid donation venues and creates attention among the network. The donor has the opportunity to be linked to the messenger's journey and can obtain full and transparent relevant information about the recipient's situation since the messenger is on spot. This enables to create a special connection through the messenger that makes the donors feel fulfilled and responsible for a good cause. The messenger has literally no restriction and all freedom of any form of communication. He has a wide range of actions and reactions to intensify the underlying emotional relationship with donor and recipient.

**Financial Efficiency** plays an important role especially when it comes to the final reporting of the donation utilisation. With GLONATE the full choice of the donor's contribution goes directly to the recipient as there is only the messenger involved and no other financial intermediary.<sup>51</sup> There won't be any hidden costs raised by any doubtful agencies on the way. The only potential costs that might occur are pure transaction fees from donor to messenger. However, the modern technology allows using very cheap and efficient online payment services such as PayPal or other donation tools. In case the donor and messenger transfer the money within the Single Euro Payments Area (SEPA), the fees will not be higher as any usual money transfer within the EU. Since the messenger is anyway living in that specific country, he can easily withdraw the donor's contribution, which is by the time already transferred to his account, when using e.g. an ATM.

With this in mind, the donor always knows how much money finally reaches the recipients leading to a unique selling proposition not involving other intermediaries inside the value chain.

Coming to the last and most important factor that is **Transparency**. As pointed out in the preliminary investigation, the proof for donors that their contribution has reached the right people is key and probably the most distinctive advantage this donation model portrays.

It might not fit very well in the lingo of a social start-up, and even though I do, I tried to avoid this term as much as I could, but the entertaining sharing of information to give

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<sup>51</sup> Assuming both donor and messenger operate within the European SEPA network

proof and reflect transparency from both directions, from the donor to the recipient or vice versa is the unique selling proposition of this social giving idea - a pure innovative and powerful approach for people being plagued and concerned with transparency matters.

Responding to an important question that might arise during the course of this paper, whether messengers might pocket the donor's contribution for themselves instead of passing on, the social giving platform will be built on a mutual reference system in which donors and messengers can write references to each other and conclusively provide trustiness and safety within the network.

## **2. Donor**

The donor is key person within the value chain as he gives the first impulse towards a donation interest. Regarding the acceptance and interest of GLONATE, interviews with several candidates between 18 and 60 were conducted and analysed. The evaluation depends on a sample size of 36 attendees who have regular Internet access.

The business model was introduced and participants were asked to express their first intuition and whether they would be interested towards a real try as donor role. 80 % of the interviewees would support the idea. Following main reasons were given:

**Ease of participation:** The participation appears easy from the perspective of the donor since there is no involved paperwork but just a usual sign up process via a website. This factor seems to be important for donors as demanding personal information such as bank and credit card details or direct debit mandates is often a criterion that leads to a loss of interest in the beginning.

**Freedom of participation:** Furthermore, the reaction of the sample showed that the majority of participants want to actually first ensure the trustworthiness and reliability of charity before concluding a long-lasting donation plan. The idea of GLONATE can comply with this request as donors can freely choose the "when" and "how much" part resulting to a feeling of no pressure as the participation is up to the donor's discretion. The fact that donors can voluntarily choose their amount of contribution, starting from 5 Euros, is also important as interviewees responded positive to the flexibility to adapt their engagement to eventual personal circumstances.



**Connecting beyond:** Another important determinant is that people who were ready to join were highly interested in connecting and socialising with other people during and beyond the donation. Nicely said by one of the interviewees: "The fact that you know that there is another like-minded person involved who is as much as you responsible for the good deed is a beneficial feeling as this shows that fighting for the same good causes in today's society can only be achieved through social interaction and collaborating"<sup>52</sup>. With this feedback, another key differentiation, that were not considered, has been pointed out; The idea of being able to connect beyond the donation is definitely something that is clearly in favour for this alternative donation model. It enables a continuous relationship among the donors and messengers. "Those people who already share the particular interest will be most likely staying in touch. And being able to mobilise the right people can lead to bigger mutual donation projects. What starts with single individuals can lead to a gathering of people focusing on high social impact and extensive awareness."<sup>53</sup>

**Being part of the journey:** Most interviewees showed clear signs of being also interested moreover in country, culture and people. The opportunity to connect with messengers would also enable them to see through the eyes of the messenger particular places and prevailing culture the donor could not otherwise access. "I can imagine how exiting it is when donating to India to see how villages look like, people live and interact."<sup>54</sup>

**Transparency of participation:** Last but not least as expected, the certain provided transparency is necessary. Most potential donors demand evidence for the final utilisation of the charity. Some donors who are already engaged with conventional social charities such as sponsoring a child or making regular monthly donation plans, disclosed that they are only provided with very basic information. Various efforts to get more insightful information beyond impersonal material or to directly connect to beneficiaries often fail as most organizations prohibit the release of information claiming to guarantee this way safety - an approach that is far from responsible disclosure.

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<sup>52</sup> Interview with Cagdas C. (2015, October 3)

<sup>53</sup> Interview with Uwe B. (2015, October 14)

<sup>54</sup> Interview with Franziska K. (2015, October 14)

According to the interviews, it can be said that the perfect donor shows following characteristics: a general curiosity towards new things and trends that demand social interaction and connecting within a community. The donor wants to step in as active role by steering and supporting the journey. Even though, he does not want to take the entire action in his own hand, he still wants to be part of the journey. He enjoys sharing and posting successful stories that create public awareness while having at the same time social impact. However, most people emphasized that they do not have a need of getting public appreciation or social fame and were also satisfied with participating without publishing it. The often-mentioned reasons to share those stories are to be part of a larger social responsible network and to emotionally touch and inspire other people. The remaining people who were not interested in being part of this donation model gave following reasons as rejection: They are rather interested in long-term donation activities that do not depend on the coincidence of the messenger's choice, a certain still prevailing mistrust and the fact that real donations should be intrinsically motivated rather than caused by social media.

### 3. Messengers

The messenger is also key person within the donation chain as he takes real action and directly interacts with recipients. He is the connector and at the same time represents the donor's goodwill.

The same qualitative research was applied for the messenger. However this time, I interviewed 30 people who were currently travelling in socially deprived countries. Most of them have been already actively engaged in travelling and backpacking around the world while sparking everyone's wanderlust.

The response was surprising, as the vast majority would immediately participate if they had been in touch with a likewise interested donor. Their motivation and drive was primarily due to following three reasons:

**Engagement in Social Charity:** Most donors felt very comfortable with the idea to do something value adding while travelling. "It is a good opportunity to explore country and people from this different angle one would not normally experience."<sup>55</sup> It goes also

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<sup>55</sup> Interview with Owen T, (2015, December 5)

hand in hand with the fact that most travellers actually strive for these kinds of cultural explorations and constantly keep looking for diversity within their journeys.

To put it another way: If you ask the present traveller if he could donate a contribution in the amount of 10 Euro, the answer is clearly yes. "There is no need to say no if you can just withdraw money for the needy people within seconds. Joining the adventure to help the poor is exactly what makes us like-minded globetrotter tick. The moment you go your path and sooner or later you end up talking to new people, spending some time with them, and eventually supporting them - that is what brings joy in our travels".<sup>56</sup>

**True valuable insights:** Another reason that was mentioned often is the messenger's curiosity and interest to discover country, culture and people from different and true angles.

"I like that it makes the traveller actually seek for social causes. This enables him to fully understand the social environment he is moving."<sup>57</sup> Often, most travellers are present in areas where they bump into other travellers, and then join all touristic attractions the area offers. In those areas tourism takes places in its aggressive form and the real impressions and problems of people fade into the background or stay at least remote. "Knowing that you have been put in an assignment encourages travellers to demand further knowledge and information. Thus, he will head for places and areas that are not on the usual itinerary - an experience that will last long."<sup>58</sup>

Most travellers also claimed that getting lost in the suburbs and villages, meeting up indigenous people were truly the peak of their journeys. "You truly get to know country and culture only when you literally jump over your own shadow and accept the social warmth all around you".<sup>59</sup>

**Connecting the World:** Another reason that has been pointed out is the desire to spark the travel spirit and the right message. For many, travelling is not just a leisure-time activity to kill some time in hotel resorts but real passion. "I would like to participate to show to most of the people how travelling can be done - in a way it helps you to broaden your horizon and others to be part of your self-discovery. The most important

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<sup>56</sup> Interview with Adrian B. (2015, December 6)

<sup>57</sup> Interview with Lisa F. (2015, December 6)

<sup>58</sup> Interview with Marc R. (2015, December 14)

<sup>59</sup> Interview with Thore B. (2015, December 10)

lesson I learned, and I speak for many among us: Travelling demands responsibility - it is and will always be a give and take."<sup>60</sup>

Hence, it can be said that the messenger has beneficial characteristics to encompass his entire environment and enables all participants to feel with him. "I want to show the efforts to all, to my family, friends, neighbours, colleagues or even strangers because it is the best feeling in the world. If I know that I can make feel other people alike, I don't see any harm of the idea of GLONATE."<sup>61</sup>

Surprisingly, during the course of the interviews, it was observed that most attendees were already indirectly involved to a certain degree in the role of a messenger. The majority already were already supporting social charities by either donating or working for the particular cause. Taking initiative is nothing new for them due to many occasions that arose from time to time when living in a new country. On these grounds, many potential messengers will face situations they might be already comfortable with.

"When travelling we have been a lot engaged with social facilities, so did we teach English in the suburbs, cleaned up large parts of rivers, took care of hurt animals, gave poor kids their daily meal, etc. Sometimes, we were even asked by locals whether we are interested in helping the community. Some communities create even larger projects solely depending on the active help of volunteers coming every now and then in to their region."<sup>62</sup> This indicates that there are lower boundaries towards the acceptance as expected.

Another decisive factor is that roughly a third of the attendees have already an idea in mind to whom they would give a donor's donation and how to utilise it best for the recipient. Most of them already lived in areas where they have build friendships with possible recipients. They know what they exactly need and where to get it preferably from. "If I would be assigned with the task now, I could locate plenty people who would highly appreciate the efforts and be greatly thankful for this little gift."<sup>63</sup>

Moreover, the attendees consent to also donate from their own pockets additionally to the donor's contribution. Being mutually convinced of following statement: "If you there anyway, and you know it took so much effort and time to be where you want to

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<sup>60</sup> Interview with Mose M. (2015, November 30)

<sup>61</sup> Interview with Ahmet Y. (2015, December 14)

<sup>62</sup> Interview with Cristian F. (2015, October 24)

<sup>63</sup> Interview with Sanjay G. (2015, November 30)

be, one would not miss the chance and give something from his deepest heart. Since it is all about connecting and sharing, you can also contribute in the same manner, maybe not with the same resources but with the same feelings."<sup>64</sup>

When asking the questions whether they could now think of someone, most of the interviewees were already crafting their journey and future emotions and expressions in their mind - a good sign to start now!

However, on the other side of the story, attendees made in the beginning strongly aware not to appeal solely to people's own self-absorption by having them posting the video or the story to show their friends what a generous person they are. According to them, the real motivation and gain of someone giving should be clear and not based on the later viral hit of the posting or sharing. "Using real world situations of people with needs for the sole purpose to make people show off and entertain is absolutely unacceptable and needs to be cautiously considered in the final implementation of the social giving platform. Even though most of us travellers regularly post their journeys and entertain on daily basis audiences, it does not reveal private circumstances of people."<sup>65</sup>

With this analysis, it can be said that people with a strong interest in travelling definitely show characteristics that support the idea of GLONATE. Knowing that the messenger can be donor at the same time, and vice versa, a donor can get his missing inspiration to start his own journey at the end is something that goes beyond the initial thoughts.

#### **4. Recipient**

For this chapter, several people across different regions in India have been interviewed. In here, the current business model was briefly explained to them and participants were asked to assess the donation model very brief with respect to the characteristics of potential recipients. An insight into culture and status of society is important for the overall conclusion.

"The situation regarding poverty is quite difficult to explain. What I have been observing is that people with less or minimum money generally complain less and do not show signs of feeling mistreated. They are happy with whatever they have. They earn their livelihood from daily labor and live their life on a daily basis. Future planning

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<sup>64</sup> Interview with Pascal O. (2015, November 11)

<sup>65</sup> Interview with Sarah J. (2015, October 14)

is no part of the everyday life because they might not need it - but again they are happy. The only situation they feel helpless is when someone in the family is sick. In this case they still they leave it to God. Please find attached in the appendices some pictures of their houses - It is up to you to decide if they are poor or rich. At the end, you might be helping out someone who is richer in happiness than you, which is also fine as it is about unique and imposing relationships. Thus, I like the idea as it touches a wide scope of action " <sup>66</sup>

"With respect to the social engagement to donate through a messenger, it is quite easy to access those people in need in my suburbs. If you are giving something free, anybody will take it. There is no problem unless someone has a high self-esteem. But if anyone want to do it regularly; you may need permission from local authority. Currently, there are some organizations working in the field of poverty reduction but primarily they work for social fame, recognition and profit. If GLONATE can prove and show that it more than just a short-wave of attention, then it can have a promising future"<sup>67</sup>

"In my area, every kind of donation will be highly appreciated and seen as good action. The question is not finding the right person among those many but the right kind of donation. The main challenge will for messenger will be to understand the real needs. In most remote villages, people are not even able to make use of money, as it does not serve as medium of exchange. Because of that, I can only suggest donating such as basic commodities they can use as support for their daily routine. Having said this, think of the fact that even books can be a problematic as most people might not speak English or even are illiterate. The idea is good but will have a lot of challenges especially in the utilisation of money"<sup>68</sup>

"What should also not be neglected is that those kinds of individual donation actions on a daily basis and engaging with local people might create rumors about religious conversion or trafficking issues. As a result, the message needs to be clearly communicated without causing suspicion. The strength of this donation chain, I consider is the messenger itself. Because only he can assure that the right donation

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66 Interview with Kalpendra Parmar representing the state Goa in India

67 Interview with Shib Sankar Das representing the state Tripura in India

68 Interview with Arjun Subramana representing the state Kerala in India

reaches the right people. To conclude, I think the idea is really good, in-fact it's excellent. We can make it more comprehensive and sustainable. "<sup>69</sup>

"India has always been in talks when it comes to poverty and hunger. People worldwide try to encash its image by selling the poor side. Especially Mumbai is no more a place of hungry. But there are really areas where they need help but no one is addressing the issue there. Government cannot take really care of such a massive population - it is simply beyond its control. Sometimes there is an overemphasis of for example natural calamities that creates nationwide panic and the result an oversupply of food or clothes. And on top, most of the time it does not reach needy people but people at upper level. I like the concept of GLONATE as it can really reach at the end needy people. There are plenty of people who can benefit from those little angels. In short, there are more mouths to feed than helping hands. And most donations are not required in money but basic necessity, and that's where it should sustainably focus on."<sup>70</sup>

## **VII: Pilot Test Evaluation**

Finally, we are reaching the last part of this paper, the evaluation of the pilot test of GLONATE that will craft the conclusion about this social project. First of all, special thanks for all participants who were part of this pilot test and whose contribution is essential to the significance of this paper. The pilot test was conducted in three countries: India, Myanmar and Thailand.

Within the pilot test, the messengers considered the donation journey as "fun, entertaining and enlightening". According to the interviews, it felt very well seeing the recipients smiling when the gifts were transferred. The messengers were emotionally fulfilled not only because they have succeeded their journey but also as they knew the contribution reached the right people. Some recipients were irritated and surprised in the beginning, particularly those who were met for the first time. Though in a matter of seconds, the tension disappeared when signaling to kindly accept the gift. "It was as we were throwing energy balls at each other, when seeing all the excitement, joy and happiness around us. Seeing the young boys wearing the previous bought shirts and shorts with a big smile and shining eyes showed us that all effort was worth." said by

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<sup>69</sup> Interview with Himanshu Ganatra representing the state Gujarat in India

<sup>70</sup> Interview with Ssumier S. Pasricha representing the state Maharashtra in India

messenger Arzu G. who donated on behalf of Anil G. and decided to give young children a surprise in form of clothes, and sweets in the value of 20 EUR while doing her trekking tour in the mountainous Northern regions of Chiang Rai in Thailand. Arzu was thrilled from the idea that according to her "peripatetic people" can serve as messenger for worthy causes.

"We felt very comfortable when we received in return a warm thank you, smiles, hugs and blessing from the families and the children, a statement by the donors Sibel & Cagdas C. who contributed 20 Euros through the messenger Clemens E. to a needy family in Jaipur in India. Clemens E. bought basic needs such as food, detergents and diapers for the newborn family member.

With respect to the question whether they would do it again, all messengers as well as donors gave a clear "yes" response, as they were satisfied with the outcome they have achieved. Donors truly felt during the entire journey connected to the messenger and welcomed the messenger's approach.

However, there were also several difficulties recorded during the pilot test. Some messengers found it hard to locate really needy people, as there were not deeply in villages or suburbs but rather bigger cities. Thus, it can be hard to make a decision and to judge about someone's situation. Some claimed that every time they thought to find someone eligible there was another person who could also be eligible. Thus, it can feel very uncomfortable if you reach a group of people and you have to make a decision. A negative feeling can arise when you donate to someone in front of other people who do not receive anything. Therefore, some messengers recommended preparing the utilisation before by e.g. asking for local advice in order to avoid inconvenient situations. This was exactly the approach of Anaise S. who gave great pleasure to her sister by donating notebooks, pens, coloured pencils and comics to an orphan located in a monastery in Hpa-An in Myanmar. Anaise asked her guesthouse for advice and were told that she could best utilise the money at this particular orphan. (See Appendix: Experience report of Anaise S.)

Positive was that most messengers once they were in action and performance, also chipped in their own money in addition to the donation. It turned out in the pilot test that at the very end, every single messenger also contributed to the social project.



Regarding the documentation and social media, the pilot test revealed that some messengers felt not good with the idea of taking pictures when giving for example gifts. Especially taking pictures of adults or older people were sometimes not appropriate. Since, there was a bit pressure to give some evidence to the donor, they rather decided to endow children, as there was no picture-taking threshold. As a result, it might be not as easy as expected to break the ice easily and capture every moment. It depends rather on each personality and time. And in some facilities you might be not even allowed to take any pictures.

What has been also observed is that the more messengers spent time with people, the less tension was persisting. De facto, there should be a certain level of interest, because just turning in the gift and leaving straight afterwards is not effective. The pilot test even showed that some messengers spend some time even days after with the recipients and truly created friendships.

Last but not least, another factor that needs to be considered is the utilisation of money. In one example, the messenger Cristain F. was given the task to donate. Once he came across a good opportunity to donate the money, he was not able to utilise the money and thus was inclined to give the money itself (See Appendix: Experience Report of Cristian F.). This is not the exact idea but at least promotes social charity. Sometimes, situations simply do not allow making some purchases on the spot. Thus, another factor that should be taken into further consideration is the efficient utilisation of the money. The only solution to this would be again preparation beforehand.

## **VIII: Conclusion**

The social giving and storytelling idea GLONATE has shown for the most part success. The major outcome of this paper is that donating through social interaction with the idea to connect donors with messengers is definitely something that attracts interest and should be further analysed.

During the course of three months, the idea enabled to connect several people across different countries and cities around the globe - A remarkable achievement from my perspective.

However, as also revealed, the main challenges still lie in the operation itself. Some find it easy to "glonate" and some again difficult. The outcome of each donation is based on personal characteristics of participants.

Several people enjoy the feeling of being a surprising angle for others and have no scruples to intensively built relationships and become part of life of others. Whereas other people again are fascinated by the idea but would rather prefer to keep the sensation volume low and enjoy the social enthusiasm from a healthy distance.

In my personal opinion, the biggest obstacle but simultaneously the most important feature is the storytelling approach. If the message and intention is clear, and all participants are intrinsically motivated to support lower needed people, there is no doubt that true and inspiring stories will have a positive effect. Nonetheless, it is easy to accidentally fall into the category of self-display and self-praise enhanced by social media. As a result, some guidelines and subtleties for best practices should properly communicated beforehand in order not to associate GLONATE with an idea where people gloat over people's living conditions.

Conclusively, I would like to end this paper by quoting Mother Theresa, founder of the Missionaries of Charity in Kolkata: "It's not how much we give but how much we love put into giving. With this in mind, I am sure that little contributions from people to people all over the world will create an all-embracing atmosphere of love.

## **IX: Limitations and Further Research**

In order not to exceed the framework of this paper, operational challenges such as technical-related issues as website, design, technology and implementation methods were not covered. Thus, a profound research from an IT perspective should be conducted in order to assess also the effectiveness and efficiency of this background processes. Yet, it is also not clear whether the money should be transferred in the beginning to a messenger or after a successful donation completion. Further research on this ground is required.

The scope of this project was limited to the target location India and partly Thailand and Myanmar. Thus, further countries should be taken into consideration and ideally more pilot tests should be conducted to achieve solid significance.

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## **Expert Interviews**

Aparna Bajpai, Operations Manager for the English Helper Project run by American India Foundation (AIF). 18 & 20 November 2015.

Nikhil Samant, social worker for the English Helper Project run by American India Foundation (AIF). 20 November 2015.

Ragyeshri Sudaroli, member of Center for Social Action (CSA) at Christ University in Bangalore. 16 November 2015.

Vineel R. Pindi, head of the Social Enterprise Incubation Center (SEIC) in Hyderabad. 25 November 2015.

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